



SHAMEFUL HERITAGE NEGLECT IN FREMANTLE

The Fremantle Society engaged in a bit of non-violent warfare with our SHAME Campaign. In the very early hours one Saturday morning, it was dark and cold, a group of us went to the Henderson Street Mall historic Warders Cottages and tied colourful ribbons to the fences in front of the buildings, spelling out the words S.H.A.M.E.

Amongst our volunteers were Labor Member for Willagee Peter Tinley and the Labor candidate for the seat of Fremantle at the next election, Simone McGurk.

The Henderson Street cottages are in the care of the Department of Housing and it is shameful these cottages have been neglected for years and are in a state of disrepair. Last year the department evicted all HomesWest residents from the cottages, so they are now vacant with no one knowing what their future will be.

There are also the vacant and neglected Married Quarter cottages at Cantonment Hill near the army barracks. The Department of Defence has been saying they want them to house personal in, but nothing has been done to them for years, and they too are falling into disrepair.

Take the lack of care by the City of Fremantle for the buildings on Arthur Head, and we have the disgraceful situation of some of our oldest buildings, supposedly cared for by three different levels of government, falling apart. It is not good enough!

We had very good media coverage about this with two radio interviews on 6PR and articles in the local newspapers.

Roel Loopers

Below: 'Shame' on the Henderson Street warders' cottages





WORKERS CLUB RESURRECTION CONFIRMS THAT FREO IS A SPECIAL PLACE

Fremantle is a very special place. That was the message people came away with when Fremantle icons Rich'n' Famous played to a sell-out crowd at the resurrected Fremantle Workers Social and Leisure Club on April 21st. It was only May 26 2011 when the club closed its doors, seemingly for the last time.

However, Don Whittington's inspired leadership brought it back to life. There are now 700 members and 300 came to hear Rich'n' Famous. The golden voiced Kavisha Mazzela thought the atmosphere reminded her of halcyon days in the nineties at the Fly By Night Club. The band was a group of friends who liked playing music together and writing songs about Fremantle.

It is ironic that the Workers' Club started as the Fremantle Club, the town's version of Perth's posh Weld Club, in the 1880s. No women merchants allowed. The so-called merchant princes grew relatively weaker and organised labour grew stronger. By 1914, with the world about to destroy itself, the Fremantle Club was replaced in its spacious premises in Henry Street by the Workers. The dusty felt hat replaced the top hat.

The founder Billy Clare had an idealistic notion of the club's purpose - to provide working men with a home. The club may have been altogether too successful in this. At

noon on Fridays - payday - in the fifties women arrived to collect their share of the pay-envelope before the serious drinking by their husbands started.

Surprisingly, the working class club took on the merchants' method of black-balling members - two black-balls and you were out. Black-balling had some interesting victims. At the concert Don Whittington told how Paddy Troy, then patron saint of the working class, was black-balled. An old club member told me, "There were no communists in the workers' club". He didn't say why. Don didn't say that twenty odd years later the club wrote to Paddy's son, John, then state member for Fremantle, to apologise for this unspeakable ideological error.

When the club moved a few doors up Henry street in 1956 to more modern quarters women were still banned. But just before the new building opened members put on a special function to "show wives how nicely their husbands were to be accommodated". Some even drank beer it was reported. It would be many years before women were again welcomed. But they are now. Everyone interested in the Fremantle story should join.

** Ron Davidson is co-author of 'The Clubs',
a lavish photographic study*

President's Report

The first six months of my presidency of the Fremantle Society are over and it has been a very busy time, attending meetings and workshops on Planning Scheme Amendment 49, Kings Square and other city development, etc.

I am disappointed that our submission on PSA 49 was largely ignored by council and we will now see buildings of up to ten storeys in inner city Fremantle. The bulk and scale will have an enormous negative impact and destroy the character of the city, I believe, and I am disappointed council was not willing to compromise and listen to the majority of people who are against highrise in the centre of town.

I see it as essential that the Society engages more regularly with the West End Traders, the Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations, as we all want the best for Fremantle and we should be working more closely together to achieve that.

It is very useful to have monthly meetings with Mayor Brad Pettitt and do one on ones with councillors whenever the need for that comes up.

We introduced monthly social dinners for members and friends at the Victoria Café on the wharf and they have been very successful.

I have also tried to keep in regular contact with members through email messages, so that you all know what we are doing and what goes on in Fremantle. Please do let me know what you'd like your committee to engage in or organise, Do volunteer to be part of working groups, man stalls, etc. We need your support!

I would love to see more activity on our Freo Tribe blog, so if you want to write articles on Fremantle related issues, please send them to us for publication on the blog. We also got a brand new Facebook page, so come and 'LIKE' it.

Our SHAME campaign at the Henderson Street Warders Cottages was a success and we got great feedback from it. It was reported in the Sunday Times, The Fremantle Herald and Gazette. I am planning to do more such actions to name and shame those who neglect our heritage buildings. Come along next time!

The proposal to make Arthur Head into an arts hub has been negatively received by J Shed artists, west end residents and the Fremantle Society, as the draft policy was unimaginative and lacked creativity, and a big picture thinking master plan for the heritage area. Good to see the policy was sent back to the officers and will be redrafted.

I have attended many meetings, met many new people, sat on discussion panels, and gave numerous radio and newspaper interviews. They are too numerous to mention any of it in detail.

We are constantly scrutinising Fremantle council and keep them on their toes. It is often rewarding but also frustrating, especially when we feel being ignored. Our advice should be sought, not swept aside as being irrelevant. Sadly some blinkered dogmatism has crept into council as far as development is concerned. People who panic make wrong decisions, and the lack of a master plan for the city has resulted in quick solutions in form of highrise. Massive development is seen by council as the saviour of Fremantle, while I believe out of scale buildings will destroy our city's uniqueness.

We have also supported local businesses. When a café owner complained the alfresco rates had doubled I contacted Mayor Brad Pettitt, who promised they would be re-calculated. 78 hospitality businesses received refunds after that. And we had more success when a business owner said promised parking bays in Wray Avenue had not been installed. Again Brad Pettitt followed this up and the car bays are now there. In that context I must say that our Mayor is very approachable and always follows up on issues when he promises to do so.

The Fremantle Society is nearly 40 years old but we still have the youthful energy and commitment to fight for our city. We need more members and would love to engage with younger people and hope many will join us, as we are fighting for their future as well.

Engage with the Fremantle blogs, as they are monitored by the City of Fremantle, and officers and councillors will take action. Check out what is on the internet about Freo by clicking on the Planet Freo aggregator the Society launched. It will tell you all about blog world and what is going on in Fremantle.

Roel Loopers

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

WE ARE TRYING TO SAVE COSTS AND TREES BY EMAILING NEWSLETTERS TO OUR MEMBERS, SO IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL, PLEASE DO SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS, SO WE CAN KEEP YOU UP TO DATE ABOUT SOCIETY EVENTS VIA THE INTERNET.

THE SOCIETY *and the* HERITAGE FESTIVAL

The celebration of Fremantle's heritage in the excitement of a festival atmosphere plays an important role in promoting the message of heritage appreciation and conservation among locals and visitors alike. With this in mind, The Fremantle Society set about to organise a variety of events for the 2012 Heritage Festival – some old favourites and some exciting additions – that not only got folks thinking about Fremantle's history, culture, and community but were also loads of fun!

Seven Fremantle Society events 'made the cut', among them the fascinating story of the Round House architect, Henry Reveley; the ever-popular *Club Crawl* through the West End, which was enjoyed by over 80 people, and the *Lunchbox Heritage* event which calls on local primary



school students to write about what makes Freo special to them. *Fremantle in the Beginning* was another great event, which gave over 70 attendees a unique and valuable insight into the history of the first Fremantle people through the oral tradition of story telling, by local historian Greg Nannup. *Heritage Open Doors* proved popular, with capacity crowds taking "the opportunity to get into State heritage places not usually open to the public". Sponsored jointly by Fremantle History Society and the



Fremantle Society, tours and talks were conducted at the Courthouses (1884 Marine Tce and 1899 Henderson St), Customs House (1908) and Carpenter's Workshops (1957/8) in Fremantle West End Conservation Area. The stories of past and current uses of each of the places was shared with visitors by volunteer tour leaders Madison Lloyd-Jones, Peter Conole, Yvonne Holland and Ainsley de Vos. The days events culminated in a convivial *Open*

Door Sundowner at Captains Lane sponsored by the Fremantle Society.

A highlight of the Festival calendar was certainly the Amazing Place Race on Saturday 2nd June. A glorious Fremantle day saw approximately 70 participants from as far as Ellenbrook and Sorrento, arrive at Arthur Head for a race around town discovering interesting historical facts, photographing monuments, getting up close with a few buskers and even catching a fish using an old fishing pole! Kids, families and couples young and old, were excited to be a part of this inaugural event. Over a sausage sizzle to mark the end of the race, many commented about how often they come to Freo but had never heard about some of the little known historical facts or seen tucked away monuments, others said it brought out their competitive side but all raved about what great fun the day was! As committee members and organisers it was an absolute pleasure to see people of all ages enjoying an outdoor activity with a difference and discovering Fremantle all over again.

Prizes were generously donated by local businesses. Glen Cowans Underwater Photography Gallery sponsored a \$90.00 gift voucher, while Moore&Moore Café donated \$50.00 and Frank's Gourmet Meats of Wray Avenue gifted \$40.00. The winners also received a *Fighting For Fremantle* book, as did a selection of the teams who stayed on. The event took the dedication of the Heritage Festival committee to get it organised and thankfully we had enough volunteers to support us throughout the day.



Reflecting on all the events is an important process and The Society already has many great ideas that are sure to make next year's Fremantle Heritage Festival another great success!

Sophie Farrar
Cathy Hall

Top left: The popular Club Crawl at the Buffalo Club
Bottom left: Greg Nannup talks about Noongar history at Bathers Beach
Bottom right: The Amazing Place Race starts at Arthur Head

Goodbye to heritage architect

AGNIESHKA KIERA

A special, but controversial, woman has left Fremantle and we owe her gratitude for all the work she has done for nearly twenty years to preserve Fremantle's heritage. I am of course talking about Fremantle Heritage architect Agnieszka Kiera, who has returned home to Poland to take up contract work with the United Nations.

I talked with Agnieszka just before she left the City of Fremantle to ask about her greatest challenges and achievements. She believes her greatest challenge was to get the Fremantle Society list embedded in council, as no legislation was available and there were no planning policies for such a major step. But through the Municipal Heritage Inventory in 1999 4000 places were registered. The list was later fully adopted in 2010 as the heritage list under the Fremantle Town Planning Scheme. There were only 11 objections to this as the community supported it.

Agnieszka is very proud of what she achieved with the Moores Building in Henry Street. The art centre and café shows that conservation is possible not as a museum piece but as a community place, and that it is open and welcoming. But she is equally proud of the beautiful Victoria Hall restorations and work done on the Kerosene Hall.

It is important to make people aware of what heritage is for their own identity and knowing who they are, she said. This is reflected in community response when

private owners lead by example and changing attitudes towards heritage.

The feisty heritage architect is critical of some modern development, saying bad and irreversible decisions were made in the seventies to revitalise Fremantle. She believes North Bank did not make Fremantle any better, and she defends what the Fremantle Society stands for.



“I am a very principled person and do speak my mind”, she smiled, objecting to being called stubborn. “I was going against the prevailing culture of development and relied on visionary and sincere people in the community and on council for support, but most of the time it was difficult.”

She said that it is regrettable that people do not understand that heritage is the greatest asset of Fremantle. The next stage should be to make the city better and more refined, sophisticated and whole as a vibrant urban environment, but that is not happening, according to Agnieszka. “Architecture affects energy and behaviour. The more options and variety we've got, the better it is.”

Agnieszka said that her work will have long lasting value for Fremantle and that she is disappointed about not being consulted on Planning Scheme Amendment 49.

Thank you for your commitment to the city and our heritage, Agnieszka!

Roel Loopers

PRIMARY SCHOOL WRITING CONTEST FOR HERITAGE FESTIVAL

As part of the Fremantle Heritage Festival the Society organised a Lunchbox writing contest for primary school students. Only the Fremantle Primary and Beaconsfield Primary schools participated unfortunately, but their kids did a great job telling us why they like Fremantle and why it is special to them.

Here some excerpts from the winning entries:

First Place getter **Claudia Charles**. Year 7, Beaconsfield Primary:

*A dancer flies past,
more eagle than woman,
skirts flowing,
the graceful contours of leg and arm soaring so perfectly through the air.
A daredevil follows her,
Torch blazing,
Sword ready.
A collective breath is held, then released,
And hands slap against each other in encore.*

and from the Second Place getter **Fred Bjorksten**, Year 7, Beaconsfield:

*Now massive container ships glide by dignified old buildings
Like otherworldly creatures.
And music and laughter bounce off the once grim asylum walls.
But I still hear the fishermen leave in the early mornings.
In summer the dry earth still yearns for rain.*

*The desert wind still heats the ground.
We still wait for the fresh sea breeze.
Some things have not changed.*

Look around, we are living amongst the stories.

And the third place entry came from **Eleanor Moore** also of Beaconsfield Primary:

Here's another thing I like about Fremantle: It's unique. Lots of people think Fremantle is just cafes and buskers. Fremantle's more than that. Fremantle is a special, inspirational, awesome place. Fremantle's friends. Fremantle's music and art. Fremantle's creativity. Fremantle's a place to belong.

Fremantle's home.

And a Highly Commended went to **Holly Marie Fuller Dear:**

What makes Fremantle special to me is Fremantle Hospital. It was first established in 1897, so it has been in Fremantle for some 115 years, but the main reason Fremantle Hospital is so special to me and my family, is because of my great-great Aunt.

Her name was Mavis Taylor Fuller, and she was born in 1902 and died in 1986. She started training to be a nurse in Fremantle Hospital in 1926. She completed her training in 1931 and started to work in the hospital.

Near miss - State Heritage Awards

The Fremantle Society was a finalist this year in the category of "Outstanding contribution to heritage by a community-based organisation"

We thank our Local Member, Adele Carles MLA for her nomination.

The very worthy winners this year were the Sisters of St John of God Heritage Centre Broome. The judges said "A shining example of a community-based organisation taking the lead in delivering a specialised and unforgettable heritage experience".

The judges recognised the work of the Fremantle History Society in this category by awarding a High Commenda-

tion. In the words of the judges "For demonstrating outstanding passion and commitment in educating the public on the diversity of Fremantle's rich cultural heritage."

On a personal note, as the representative of the Society on the grand evening along with Committee member Sophie Farrar - the one that got away for me was the last award of the event in the Government House ballroom; the Judges' Award for *personal effort, dedication, commitment and achievement in the field of heritage.*

I felt deeply disappointed when WA's, Fremantle's and the Society's Agnieszka Kiera was not given this award in recognition for her very significant efforts over her years as Heritage Architect with the City of Fremantle.

Henty Farrar

BIGGER *isn't* BETTER

The proposed Planning Scheme Amendment 49 is simply too big for a small city like Fremantle. It includes too many (17) sites in a relatively small area of the inner city, and the scale model produced by the Fremantle Society and Fremantle Herald showed the dramatic impact such development would have on Fremantle's human scale and ambience. When we often talk about the footprints we leave, we also need to consider development footprints, and this one is huge, like a giant stepping on an ant.

The argument here is not against development, or change, or medium to high-density buildings, it is about the whole social impact such large-scale development would have on the city.

Fremantle council seems to have the philosophy that if we built lots of big buildings and many more people live in the inner city, things will just happen, while not much has been planned as far as infrastructure, public open spaces, larger leisure centres, traffic, social activities, etc. go. City development however should be about place making. If we create a great place people will want to live here, businesses will want to come here. Just building big buildings is not going to achieve that.

There is also a naivety about people using bikes and public transport, instead of cars, but there are problems with that wishful thinking. There are not enough trains and carriages on the major lines, so how would the new residents get in and out of Fremantle? Families need cars to get kids to school, sport and social events, etc.

The City of Fremantle has not done a traffic impact study on what major development in the inner city would mean. Traffic jams will be inevitable, although Mayor Brad Pettit keeps saying Fremantle never has traffic problems when

thousands of people come here on weekends. That though is very different from rush hour traffic when thousands of people need to leave town to get to work and come back into Freo after business hours. The mayor also keeps going on about light rail, and I support that, but the State Government has already shown they are not interested in funding light rail for Freo, so who is going to do it? The city does not have the capital for such major project.

Instead of putting all our eggs in the one, inner city,

basket, Fremantle needs to embrace and acknowledge the future developments at the Queen Victoria Street, Knutsford Street and Lefroy Street sites, and should also encourage medium density along parts of Marine Parade. We must also not forget the influx of new residents at South Beach, Coogee and Leighton. They are all potential new

shoppers for our retailers who will socialise, eat and drink in Fremantle.

There is no argument from me that Fremantle needs to grow, even grow up, but it does not have to be done all at once. Ideally we let the Woolstores and Gas&Coke sites be developed first, and then check if the people of Fremantle like the height, bulk, building style, etc. We could then take it from there to make decisions in the future on the other sites.

In a perfect world the City should have first developed the Point Street car park site it owns, so they could have set an example for developers on architecture, style and building excellence. That is an opportunity lost now.

The Fremantle Society does not want to stop development and progress, but panic is not a good advisor, and neither is inflexibility.

Roel Loopers

Above: PSA 49 scale model displayed at the Adelaide Plaza



ROUND HOUSE ROUND-UP

BOB REECE

What can I tell you about the Round House that you don't already know?' I said to Les Green when he asked me to address the Fremantle Heritage Guides AGM. As it happened, I was able to find a few pieces of new information. Firstly, Pam Hartree (as head of the FCC's Local History Collection) had pointed out to me that a photograph of the Round House and environs dated 1870-75 reveals, when looked at very closely with a magnifying glass, a small bell on a tall framed stand to the extreme right of the building. How and when it came to be there does not seem to have been recorded. Was it a ship's bell commandeered for the purpose, and what eventually happened to it? Nobody can now tell us. This was the famous (or notorious) curfew bell which was sounded during the convict era at 9.50 p.m. each night to warn ticket-of-leave men they had just ten minutes to return to their lodgings. Observing the curfew was one of the conditions attached to conditional release, which could be overturned by a magistrate at any time and without the convict having the right to speak on his own behalf.

After 10.00 p.m., any man walking the streets of Fremantle could be challenged by the constables: 'Bond or free?' If the answer was 'Bond', the hapless ticket-of-leave man would find himself thrown into the Round House for the night to face the magistrate the next morning.

Our first historian J.K. Hitchcock (*History of Fremantle*, 1929) arrived in Fremantle in 1868, the year transportation came to an end and when Fremantle was full of ticket-of-leave men. So anxious were the town's male

inhabitants to avoid being mistaken for ticket-of-leave men, easily distinguished by their close-shaven heads, that a hirsute appearance was almost mandatory: *In the convict days it was necessary for every free man to wear a full beard and long hair. To be seen closely cropped or shaven would at once create the suspicion that one had just come out of gaol, hence a convict's first care on attaining his liberty was to cultivate a flowing beard as soon as possible.*

Although the era of the Convict Establishment came to an end in 1886, the bell continued to be sounded for many years as a warning to licensees of hotels and taverns to shut their doors.



Above: The Roundhouse (top) in 1870/75, and (below) in 2012

It was never recorded when the bell ceased to be rung and what then became of it. However, it was a familiar sound for anyone who lived through that era.

Today, with increased tourist interest in the Round House and its associated stories, there is the question of whether a replica of the curfew bell on the same site would be a good idea. There is always the problem of vandalism at that end of town, alas, but a sufficiently tall metal frame might be the answer – and a bell without a clapper! An interpretative display nearby could tell the bell's story, providing another point of interest for the visitors who flock to the area.

In Perth, ticket-of-leave men employed by a brick-maker on a piece of land next to the residence of Edward Stone were also summoned by a 10 p.m. bell to return to their two-room huts on the site or face arrest by the constables.

The second piece of information provided to the Guides had to do with the original Colonial

Engineer, Henry Willey Reveley, who designed the Round House as Swan River Colony's first permanent building. The old belief was that his unusual, twelve-sided plan was influenced by the circular Martello Towers erected on the English and Irish coasts and in various parts of the British Empire as defences against threatened French invasion during the Napoleonic era.

There is a superficial resemblance, to be sure, but I know from my acquaintance with the Martello tower at Seapoint on Dublin Bay where my wife and I lived for six months in early 1987 (made famous by James Joyce in the first chapter of his famous novel *Ulysses*) that the towers were two-level structures designed as impregnable fortresses and furnished with gunports.

The Round House, I believe, was inspired instead by

the drawings Reveley's architect father, Willey Reveley, was commissioned to make in 1791 for the *Panopticon*, penologist and social reformer Jeremy Bentham's concept of a circular, multi-storied prison that gave the warders at the central hub of the building an uninterrupted view of the prisoners housed in cells lining the periphery. At the same time, prisoners were to be blocked from seeing the warders, meaning that could never be sure whether or not they were under surveillance.

Bentham bitterly opposed the transportation of convicts

to New South Wales when it was first proposed in the mid-1780s, believing that it would amount to a loss of national wealth in the export of labour which could otherwise be put to profitable use at home. Among other things, the *Panopticon* was to be a private enterprise endeavour, supporting itself with the revenue earned from prisoners' work.

As it happened, Bentham's idea was never fully taken up, but the

*"In its own way,
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with the Athens of
Themistocles and Phidias"*



Round House is a reminder of his ingenious scheme.

At the same time, Reveley's plan reflected his father's association with what was called the Greek Revival Movement in English architecture in the late eighteenth century through his preparation of some of the drawings in a textbook for those seeking to emulate the styles of classical Greece.

In its own way, the Round House is linked with the Athens of Themistocles and Phidias.

Bob Reece is Professor Emeritus in History at Murdoch University

STOP PRESS: In late breaking news, the curfew bell is to be re-installed in a wooden frame on Arthur Head.